

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 SSO-00 SS-15 NSCE-00 PA-01

ICA-11 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 /057 W

-----081566 121633Z /66

O R 121610Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3754

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 3331

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PA

SUBJECT: POLITICAL PRISONERS: HUNGER STRIKE

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. SEVENTEEN OF THE EIGHTEEN PRISONERS AT EMBOSCADA PRISON BEGAN AN INDEFINITE HUNGER STRIKE AT NOON AUGUST 11. IN A LETTER TO INTERIOR MINISTER MONTANARO THE STRIKERS DEMANDED THE FREEDOM OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, AN ACCOUNTING FOR MISSING POLITICAL PRISONERS AND THE LIFTING OF THE STATE OF SIEGE. ONE PRISONER, DOMINGO ROLON, HAS NOT JOINED THE STRIKE SO THAT HE CAN ACT AS THE STRIKERS' SPOKESMAN. THE DEPARTMENT MAY RECALL THAT THE THREE SPOKESMEN FOR THE LAST HUNGER STRIKE, ALSO, STRIKERS, HAVE BEEN SENT TO POLICE JAILS. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. A GROUP OF RELATIVES OF THE PRISONERS VISITED THE EMBASSY AUGUST 11 MORING TO SEEK THE EMBASSY'S ASSISTANCE IN ALLEVIATING THE SITUATION OF THE EMBOSCADA PRISONERS. THEY SAID, AND THE INFORMATION HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY THE COMITE DE IGLESIAS, THAT THE PRISONERS ARE ALL LOCKED IN A SINGLE CELL AT 6:00P.M. WHICH IS NOT UNLOCKED UNTIL 6:00 A.M. THE FOLLOWING MORNING. FOR THIS PERIOD THE PRISONERS HAVE NO LIGHT, NO WATER AND NO TOILET FACILITIES. THEY ARE GIVEN NO WOOD TO EITHER COOK FOOD  
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OR TO STAY WARM. THIS IS WINTER IN PARAGUAY.

3. THE EMBASSY HAS MADE INQUIRIES TO GOP OFFICIALS REGARDING THE SITUATION OF THE POLITICAL PRISONERS. INTERIOR MINISTRY UNDER SECRETARY BESTARD HAS DENIED TO AN EMBOFF THAT THE PRISONERS HAVE INADEQUATE FACILITIES AND CLAIMED THAT SANITARY FACILITIES AND OTHER NECESSARY AMENITIES ARE AVAILABLE TO

THEM. (IN THE PAST, BESTARD HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN WELL-INFORMED ON PARTICULAR SITUATIONS.) BESTARD ALSO SAID THAT THE GOP PLANNED TO START REVIEWING THE CASES OF THE REMAINING POLITICAL PRISONERS AUGUST 15.

4. FOUR RELATIVES OF PRISONERS REAPPEARED AT THE EMBASSY AUGUST 12 MORNING. THEY HAD JUST RETURNED FROM EMBOSCADA (SATURDAY IS THE USUAL VISITING DAY) WHERE PRISON OFFICIALS TOLD THEM THAT THEY COULD NOT VISIT THE PRISONERS NOR COULD THEY HAND OVER CLEAN CLOTHING AND FOOD BECAUSE OF THE HUNGER STRIKE.

WHITE

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Review Markings:**  
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